

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks. Of claims 1-19 that were pending in the application, claims 1-3, 5-10, and 13-19 were rejected in the Office Action. No amendments are presented herein and, therefore, claims 1-19 respectfully remain pending for further consideration.

Applicants greatly appreciate the positive indication of allowable subject matter in each of claims 4, 11, and 12. As it is respectfully believed that the claims from which claims 4, 11, and 12 depend are allowable, Applicants have, at this time, opted not to place any of claims 4, 11, and 12 in independent claim format.

1. Rejections of Claims 1-3, 5-10, and 13-19

The Examiner rejected: (a) claims 1, 5-9, 13-16, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,810,120 (“Jamieson”); and (b) claims 2, 3, 10, 17, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious when considering Jamieson in view of JP5-116869 (“Yoshiaki”). For at least the following reasons, Applicants respectfully traverse each of these rejections.

Independent claim 1 (*i.e.*, the claim from which claims 2, 3, and 5-8 depend) recites a roller guide assembly (14) for an elevator system (10). This roller guide assembly includes, among other possible things (*italic and underline emphasis added*):

a roller (16) having a hardness that varies responsive to a magnetic field (20).

Similarly, independent claim 9 (*i.e.*, the claim from which claims 10 and 13-15 depend) recites an elevator system that includes among other possible things (*italic emphasis and underline added*):

at least one guide rail (28);
an elevator car (12) movable along the guide rail (28);
a roller (16) supported for movement with said elevator car (12), *said roller (16) rolling along a surface of said guide rail (28) and having a hardness that varies* responsive to a magnetic field (20); and
a magnetic field generator (18) that selectively generates said magnetic field (20).

Finally, independent claim 16 (*i.e.*, the claim from which claims 17-19 depend) recites a method of “controlling vibration of an elevator car (12) that has an associated plurality of rollers (16) adapted to guide the elevator car (12) along a guide rail (28)[.]” This method includes, among other possible steps (*italic and underline emphasis added*):

a) determining a condition of the elevator car (12) relative to a desired

- condition; and
b) selectively *varying a hardness of at least one of the rollers* (16) responsive to said determined condition.

As hereafter explained, Jamieson and Yoshiaki standing alone and/or combined can not be used to anticipate or render obvious the roller guide assembly recited in claim 1, the elevator system recited in claim 9, or the method recited in claim 16. Each of the independent claims 1, 9, and 16 recites that a *hardness* of the roller is selectively variable.

In contrast to the above-italicized limitations, Jamieson teaches an active roller guide that uses counteracting forces generated by solenoid assemblies 22, 24 and electromagnets 34, 36 to vary the pressure at which the rollers 30, 32 are forced against the rails 14, 16, thereby horizontally adjusting the position of the car 12. See Jamieson at Abstract, col. 3, lines 23-64. Jamieson fails to teach or suggest that the *hardness* of the rollers 30, 32 themselves is varied. Moreover, as hereafter explained Yoshiaki fails to cure this shortcoming of Jamieson.

Yoshiaki teaches, as best shown in Fig. 2, a magnetic fluid 22 housed within a damper device 20. The viscosity of the fluid 22, which is varied by an electromagnetic coil 23, varies a pressure by which a lever 9 acts upon a roller guide 10. The magnetic fluid 22 in Yoshiaki does not, however, vary a *hardness* of the roller guide 10.

In light of the foregoing, Jamieson and Yoshiaki (standing alone or combined) fail to teach or suggest that the hardness of a roller is variable, as above-italicized in claims 1, 9, and 16. As such, Jamieson and Yoshiaki can not be used to reject claims 1, 9, and 16, or any claim dependent thereon, under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b), 103(a). Moreover, as claims 2, 3, and 5-8 depend from claim 1, as claims 10 and 13-15 depend from claim 9, and as claims 17-19 depend from claim 16, each of these dependent claims is also allowable over Jamieson and Yoshiaki, without regard to the other patentable limitations recited therein. Accordingly, a withdrawal of each of the rejections of claims 1-3, 5-10, and 13-19 is both warranted and earnestly solicited.

2. Conclusion

In light of the foregoing, claims 1-19 are in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference will be useful to move this case forward toward issue, Applicant's representative will be happy to discuss any issues regarding this application and can be contacted at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482 in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds for any necessary fees or credit the account for any overpayment.

Respectfully submitted,

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